

Proposed Notifiable Conditions Regulations

by Greg Smith, MPA

Update and Overview: For the past two years, the state Department of Health (DOH), the Department of Labor and Industries (L&I), and the State Board of Health have been engaged in a process for revising the state's system for tracking infectious and noninfectious diseases and conditions that must be reported to public health authorities.

This process has yielded a set of proposed regulations that will comprehensively revise and integrate the notifiable conditions system for Washington. The regulations are available for your review at:

<http://www.doh.wa.gov/os/policy/feedback.htm>

At that site you can download the draft regulations, and a document that will assist you in navigating from the current regulations (WAC 246-100 and WAC 246-420) to the proposed regulations (WAC 246-101). Over the course of the next several weeks a variety of public meetings will be held at locations across Washington to engage public comment. You will also have opportunity to comment on the regulations via the Internet. All you need to do is compose your comments and click **Submit** from the web page noted above. **Comments should be received by May 15, 2000** to be considered for inclusion in the revision of this draft of the regulations and the development of the final draft of the proposed regulations, which will be produced

by May 24, 2000. The hearing to adopt the rules will be held on July 12, 2000, Campus Center, University of Washington, in Seattle. It is expected that the final regulations will be implemented by **September 1, 2000**.

Why Notify Public Health Agencies of Health Events?

It's a matter of protecting the public's health. Tracking communicable and other diseases is a primary function of public health agencies. This type of data is critical to local health departments in their efforts to control the spread of diseases such as tuberculosis, measles, hepatitis and HIV/AIDS, just to name a few. This type of data is also critical to national epidemiological efforts conducted by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and other public health organizations.

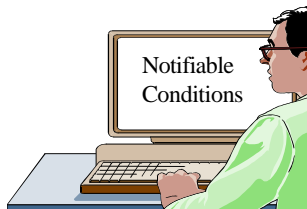
Based on these reports, health officials take steps to protect the public. Treating persons already ill, providing preventive therapies for individuals who have been exposed to

infectious agents, investigating and halting outbreaks, and mitigation of harmful substances are key ways health officials protect the public.

At the state and national level, public health workers use this data to assess broader patterns, such as historical trends and geographic clustering. By analyzing the broader picture, officials are able to take appropriate actions, be it outbreak investigation, redirection of program activities, or policy development.

Why Revise the Current Regulations? The reporting of "notifiable conditions" is a special form of surveillance. Laboratories and others report certain health events to the local or state health departments. Periodically, it's important that the list of what conditions are notifiable

continued on page 2



Inside This Issue

- 2 Notifiable Conditions Revisions, cont'd
- 2 Clinipad Product Recall
- 3 Glycated Hemoglobin Update / Outpatient
- 3 Prospective Payment System / New Waived Tests
- 4 MTS WAC Update / Calendar of Events

Notifiable Conditions Regulations, continued from page 1

undergo review and revision because public health priorities and the epidemiology of specific conditions evolve. Public health interventions also change. The goal of the revision is to make sure that data on all notifiable conditions actually are needed and used for public health purposes and that public health officials have the data they need to do their jobs.

Another goal of the revision is to assure that regulations are rewritten in a clear and logical manner and that they are understandable to those who use them. The rule revision also anticipates new and evolving methods of data collection and dissemination throughout the public health system.

Justification for reporting. DOH coordinated a workgroup that together with representatives from local health, clinical laboratories, and the Department of Labor and Industries set 12 criteria to prioritize diseases and conditions for notification. Criteria included: morbidity, mortality, preventability, treatability, communicability, agricultural effect, socioeconomic effect, and the need for immediate action. The principal focus in developing the revised list of conditions for notification was the commitment to take public health action based on notifications of various conditions.

“ELABORATIONS” is a free monthly publication of the Washington State Department of Health (DOH) Public Health Laboratories (PHL) and Office of Laboratory Quality Assurance (LQA).

Secretary, DOH: Mary Selecky
Health Officer: Maxine Hayes, MD, MPH
Director, PHL: Jon Counts, Dr.P.H.
Program Manager, LQA: Gail Neuenschwander
Editor: Leonard Kargacin (206) 361-2804
Circulation: Leonard Kargacin (206) 361-2804

Comments, letters to the editor, information for publication, and requests for subscription can be directed to:

“ELABORATIONS”
Washington State Public Health Labs
1610 NE 150th Street
Shoreline, WA 98155

e-mail address: leonard.kargacin@doh.wa.gov

NOTE: Letters to the editor may be published unless specified otherwise by the author.

Website addresses:

DOH home page: <http://www.doh.wa.gov>
LQA home page:
http://www.doh.wa.gov/hsqa.fsl/LQA_Home.htm

Now is the time for you to comment. Please use the web site above to access the draft regulations, and please comment on how these can be improved. Over the course of the next several weeks a variety of public meetings will be held at locations across Washington to engage public comment. The meeting dates and locations will be posted on the website and will be included in future issues of **ELABORATIONS**. Your input into the process at this point is needed.

For more information and to participate in the development of the new notifiable conditions surveillance system for Washington, please contact Greg Smith, Washington State Department of Health, PO Box 47815, Olympia, WA 98504-7815. You may also correspond via electronic mail by writing to greg.smith@doh.wa.gov.

Product Recall

The Clinipad Corporation is voluntarily recalling all Povidone Iodine, Tincture of Iodine, Benzoin Tincture, Acetone Alcohol and Alcohol Antiseptic products (swabsticks, prep pads, towelettes, and pouches) as well as Cliniguard® Protective Dressing labeled as “sterile” that were manufactured over the last three years. The reason for this recall is that the company has confirmed microbial contamination in some lots of its sterile products. Although there have been no confirmed reports of patient complaints or injuries related to any contamination, Clinipad has decided to voluntarily recall the above mentioned products.

Further information about the recall and a list of the sterile products involved can be found at the following websites:

Letter:

<http://www.fda.gov/medwatch/safety/2000/clinip.htm>

Product list:

<http://www.fda.gov/medwatch/safety/2000/clinip.htm>

FDA Arm Preparation Information:

<http://www.fda.gov/cber/infosheets/armprep.htm>

FDA - Questions and Answers:

<http://www.fda.gov/cber/infosheets/armprepq&a.htm>

Glycated Hemoglobin Standardization Project

by Jon Counts, DrPH, MPH

In the March edition of **ELABORATIONS**, an article addressed a project that the Department of Health has embarked on to improve diabetes care by increasing the use of standardized methods of glycated hemoglobin testing. Enclosed in this edition are copies of two letters from the Health Care Financing Administration Region X office and Health Plan Medical Directors that endorse the use of certified laboratory methods.

The Department of Health encourages you to support this important initiative to improve the care of patients with diabetes.

Outpatient Prospective Payment System (OPPS)

by Maryann Gober

The Department of Labor and Industries, the Department of Social and Health Services' Medical Assistance Administration, and the Health Care Authority Uniform Medical Plan have recently decided to delay the July 1, 2000 implementation of an outpatient prospective payment system. The OPPS Technical Advisory Group has placed the implementation of the Washington OPPS on hold, until HCFA releases their final regulations later this spring for the Ambulatory Payment Classification based OPPS. The HCFA information will be utilized in the future development of the Washington OPPS. Further updates will be placed in future issues of **ELABORATIONS**.

Additional Waived Procedures

The Office of Laboratory Quality Assurance has received notice from the Health Care Financing Administration that the following procedures have been added to the list of waived tests under CLIA:

Test:	Effective Date:	CPT Code:
• Roche Diagnostics Chemstrip Micral (urine dipstick) for microalbumin	5-07-99	Pending
• LNX IN CHARGE Diabetes Control System for glucose and fructosamine	9-16-99	Pending
• Fisher HealthCare Sure-Vue Strep A (direct from throat)	10-01-99	Pending
• AvoSure PT System (prescription home use)	2-16-00	Pending
• AvoSure PT Pro (Professional Use)	2-16-00	Pending
• Remel RIM A.R.C. Mono Test (whole blood)	2-28-00	Pending
• Remel RIM A.R.C. Strep A Test (direct from throat)	2-28-00	Pending
• Polymer Technology Systems BioScanner (for OTC use) for HDL Cholesterol	2-28-00	Pending
• Polymer Technology Systems BioScanner (for OTC use) for Blood Ketones	3-01-00	Pending
• Polymer Technology Systems MTM BioScanner 1000 (for OTC use) for Cholesterol	3-21-00	Pending

Revised MTS WAC

The revised Medical Test Site (MTS) WAC (246-338) was finalized at a public meeting held on February 22, 2000. The new rules are effective as of March 31, 2000.

A copy of the revised WAC accompanies this issue of **ELABORATIONS**. If you have any questions, please contact Gail Neuenschwander:

phone: (206) 361-2805

e-mail: gail.neuenschwander@doh.wa.gov.

Calendar of Events

PHL Training Classes:

Examination of Urine Sediments

May 24

Shoreline

May 25

Shoreline

WSSCLS/NWSSAMT Spring Meeting

April 27-29

Seattle

Northwest Medical Laboratory Symposium

October 18-21

Tacoma

7th Annual Clinical Laboratory Conference

November 13

Seattle

Contact information for the events listed above can be found on page 2. The Calendar of Events is a list of upcoming conferences, deadlines, and other dates of interest to the clinical laboratory community. If you have events that you would like to have included, please mail them to **ELABORATIONS** at the address on page 2. Information must be received at least one month before the scheduled event. Editor reserves the right to make final decisions on inclusion.

ELABORATIONS

Washington State Department of Health

1610 NE 150th Street

Shoreline, WA 98155